



SOUTHEAST NEWS

February - March 2017

Southeast Elementary School, 134 Warrenville Rd., Mansfield Center, CT 06250

423-2793

Dear Parents and Guardians,

With the white snow of winter surrounding me, I was inspired to pick out a certain read aloud for my children. One that I remember my teacher reading to me when I was in fifth grade and I couldn't get enough of it (and was always disappointed with where the chapter ended because I wanted to hear more). The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe has been the family read right now and my first grade son asked last night, "Mom, how can this book be so good? I mean, like everything about it!" This was after the mysterious Aslan was introduced as a character by Mr. Beaver and I completely understood his excitement and intrigue. I wonder what book you may be reading right now with your children?



I was working on our school budget over the past few weeks and was looking at our classroom libraries and the needs we may have with our new reading workshop model for next year in our K-2 classes. We also are entering our second year of reading workshop in Grades 3 & 4. One of the few cornerstones of the program is the independent reading time block and the students' self selection of books they want to read. I was curious at the amount of books we may be reading as a school and asked the students and staff to keep a tally of books read in for three weeks in January. I was astounded at the amount of books that the students have read both in and out of school. We ranged from 1,429 to 1,657 books per week. Therefore, we are averaging about 1,500 books per week! I hope you can help us keep wonderful books in our children's hands by taking frequent trips to the public library or setting up a used book exchange with a few of your child's classmates. That could be a fun way to start off or end a play-date!

I look forward to seeing you at some of the upcoming PTO events and possibly the Third and Fourth Grade Concert this Thursday. Enjoy the New England snow!



Fondly,
Ms. Lauren Rodriguez

Mark Your Calendars:

Feb. 17.....**NO SCHOOL**- Staff Professional Development
Feb. 20.....**NO SCHOOL**- Presidents' Day
Feb. 21.....**NO SCHOOL**- Vacation Day

Calendar of Events

February

Feb. 2..... 3:30-4:50 Homework Help Club
7:00 Third & Fourth Grade Concert



Feb. 3..... 4th Gr. Ice Skating Field Trip

Field Trip!

Feb. 8..... 9:00-1:30 Gr. 2 Field Trip to
CT Historical Society



Feb. 15..... 6:00-7:15 Kindergarten & Gr. 1 Literacy
Night at Mansfield Public Library

Feb. 16..... 3:45-5:00 Green Thumbs Club

Feb. 17..... **NO SCHOOL**- Staff Professional Development

Feb. 20..... **NO SCHOOL**- Presidents' Day



Feb. 21..... **NO SCHOOL**- Vacation Day

Feb. 27..... 6:30- Southeast PTO meeting



March

Mar. 8..... 6:30-7:30 Science Fair / Invention Convention

Mar. 10..... **NO SCHOOL**- Staff Professional Development

Mar. 20..... 3:45-5:00 Green Thumbs Club

6:30- Southeast PTO meeting



Looking Ahead:

Apr. 7..... 2:00-3:20 Enrichment Clusters

Apr. 10-14.... **NO SCHOOL**- April Vacation

Apr. 17..... 6:30- Southeast PTO meeting



Apr. 18..... 3:45-5:00 Green Thumbs Club

Apr. 21..... 2:00-3:20 Enrichment Clusters

Apr. 28..... 2:00-3:20 Enrichment Clusters

May 1-12..... Smarter Balanced Assessment Testing

May 4..... 6:00 First & Second Grade Concert

May 5..... 2:00-3:20 Enrichment Clusters- LAST DAY

May 15..... 6:30- Southeast PTO meeting

May 18..... 3:45-5:00 Green Thumbs Club- LAST DAY

May 29..... **NO SCHOOL**- Memorial Day

June 5..... 6:30- Southeast PTO meeting

June 7..... 3rd Grade Field Trip to Nathan Hale

June 21..... Proposed Last Day of School

Includes 5 built in weather related closings.

If these days are not needed, the last school day will be adjusted accordingly.



Attendance Line/Nurse: 423-2793 Please call by 9:00 AM if your child will be absent or tardy



Music Corner

Third & Fourth Grade Concert



Where: Southeast Gym

When: Thursday, February 2, 2017 7:00 PM
6:30 arrival for Southeast Singers
6:45 arrival for all students

Who: All 3rd & 4th grade students and families

What: This concert will allow the students to share the songs and musical concepts they have been learning in general music classes.

- Third grade classes will share poems they have transferred to drums.
- The Southeast Singers will give the very first choir performance ever at Southeast School.
- Each fourth grade class will share a song: one with a hand clapping game, one with a xylophone ostinato, and one with 3-part harmony.
- The concert will conclude with a sing-a-long for all students and families. We will sing *We Shall Overcome* and *Winter Fantasy*, a partner song between Jingle Bells and a composed counter-melody.

What to Wear? When we perform as musicians at a concert we dress professionally in dress clothes.

- Boys and Girls– please wear nice pants, a dress shirt, tie (optional), skirt, dress, and dress shoes
- No jeans, sneakers, or shirts with writing

Mark your calendars and I look forward to seeing everyone on February 2nd.

Miss Smallidge, Music Educator
smallidgek@mansfieldct.org

Snack Time



Please don't forget to pack a snack for your child. Snack time is part of most classroom routines. Children are encouraged to bring healthy snacks such as fruit, vegetables, juice, etc. in non-breakable containers.

Snacks are not supplied by the teachers or the school.



Please remember to label your child's belongings. Putting your child's name inside his/her coat, lunch box, backpack, etc. will help us return them to your child.

Sometimes coats are left outside at recess and we would rather reunite them with their owner than toss them in the Lost & Found box. We've also begun hanging found hats, gloves, sweatshirts, etc. on the PTO bulletin board in the parent pick-up area. Larger items are put in the Lost & Found box. Please ask your child to take a look there for any lost items.



Ask Mrs. Doyle...

Dear Mrs. Doyle,

My seven year old can read and understand short stories on her reading level, but chapter books seem to intimidate her. She doesn't want to read them and says they are confusing. What should I do?

Sincerely,
Perplexed Parent

Dear Perplexed Parent,

While some children can't wait to read chapter books, others don't want to leave the comfort zone of a shorter text. It is often easier to comprehend the shorter plot of a picture book, assuming the reading level and other literary elements are equal.

Understanding and being able to talk about a chapter book requires a higher level of comprehension than is needed for an equivalent picture book. In a chapter book, children get to know characters as the text progresses and the main character often changes in some way during the story. A chapter book reader needs to remember information from the beginning of the book, as the story unfolds, and apply that knowledge to incidents that come up a few chapters later. There is a main problem or challenge in each chapter book, but there can also be secondary issues or challenges.

I have two suggestions for you:

- First, read some chapter books out loud to your child. You and she can enjoy the books together and your daughter won't be reading the print *and* thinking about the meaning at the same time. (Keep reading picture books, too.)
- Second, introduce chapter books that are episodic by chapter – Those that have the same characters throughout, but each chapter has its own, fairly isolated, problem and solution. These types of chapter books are easier to comprehend and are good stepping stones to the more traditional chapter book. Examples include: the *George and Martha* series by James Marshall (easier), *The Stories Julian Tells* series by Ann Cameron, the *Wayside School* series by Louis Sachar, and *Gooney Bird Green* by Lois Lowry.

I hope your daughter begins to enjoy chapter books. Be patient, though. It is better for your child to build the needed skills, confidence, and desire over time than for you to push too hard, too fast.

Happy reading!
Amanda Doyle, Literacy Coach
doylear@mansfieldct.org

P.S. Did you know that the author, James Marshall, had a home in Mansfield Hollow?

The Food Waste Challenge: Save Money and Help the Environment

Did you know that Americans waste about 25% of purchased food & drink, costing families approximately \$130 a month and resulting in huge environmental impacts from the wasted water, energy and fuel used to produce, package, and transport food?

The Southeast PTO has teamed up with the Town of Mansfield Solid Waste Advisory Committee to enlist your help by taking the Food Waste Challenge. It's simple: families receive a toolkit to collect uneaten food that goes to waste, and record their uneaten food for 4 weeks (record weekly or daily). Each week of participation you will receive tips and incentives to help you reduce waste. Learn tips for shopping, preparing, storing and saving food, and **REDUCE YOUR GROCERY BILL**. Involve your kids and teach them about food waste and its impacts!

The Challenge runs February 12 to March 12, 2017. To sign up, contact Virginia Walton, Mansfield Recycling Coordinator, waltonvd@mansfieldct.org, or 860-429-3333. You will receive the materials you need to get started and on-going support.

Together we can make a big difference!!

Project Feeder Watch

Project Feeder Watch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, and community areas in North America. Our students and staff have been counting the birds they have seen at the multiple feeders in the garden at Southeast School since November. This data has helped scientists track movements of winter bird populations and long term trends in bird distribution. Any students interested in birds can participate.

In order for this project to be successful, we need to keep our feathered friends well fed. The feeders need to be filled at all times. **Our seed supply is running low.** If you are willing to donate a bag of bird seed, please drop it off in the office. All donations are greatly appreciated any time throughout the year.

Attention Parents who ♥ Science & Inventing!

Our Science Fair and Invention Convention is coming up on March 8th. We would love to support all students who are interested in this event. We need your help! Call or email Mrs. Irvine susan.irvine@mansfieldct.org if you are able to:

- ⇒ Assist students with projects at SE over the next few weeks between 11:45-12:45
- ⇒ Help us find a judge or two for the invention convention
- ⇒ Share your science or invention interests with classes
- ⇒ Help with some organizing for the event
- ⇒ Help set up tables before the event
- ⇒ Take photos at the event

More information can be found at www.mansfieldct.gov/sfic



Asher, Lily, Jonas, Ryan, Mrs. Ziko weeding the garden to prepare for the birds this fall.



First Grade Explores Holiday Traditions Around the World

The month of December was an exciting one in first grade. The children learned about holiday traditions around the world as they followed our new friend "Globe Trot Scott" from continent to continent. Several times a week, first grade classes received packages with information and holiday tradition activities from whatever country he was visiting that day. We were lucky to get to learn about holiday traditions in both Brazil and Denmark by skyping with Ms. Salvato and Ms. MacKenzie. Another fun activity was learning about Germany and the tradition of making gingerbread houses, thanks to the help of Mr. and Mrs. Panagopoulos (Mrs. Proffer's parents). We can't wait to see where Globe Trot Scott takes us next year.



Students are learning about Israel and Hanukkah from Mr. Hartman.



Building gingerbread houses

Cordelia climbs the Tower of Power.



Naomi crosses over the Rainbow.



Melia conquers the Balance Beam.



Addison tackles the Multi Vine.



The Trestle Tree

A physical education program unique to Mansfield Public Schools, the Trestle Tree satisfies the differentiated needs of all children. Beginning with low heights and simple activities in Preschool and Kindergarten, the Trestle Tree progressively gets higher and more challenging as children get older and more skilled. Activities on the Trestle Tree include creative movement, problem solving initiatives, movement exploration games, gymnastic skills, strength building, climbing and landing techniques, and cooperation.

The Trestle Tree, which consists of many components, is creatively assembled in various forms resembling a cross between gymnastic apparatus and an indoor playscape. The components of the Trestle Tree include trestles, balance beams, bridges, ladders, bars, nets, slides, mats, and ropes.

Southeast LOVES Reading!

Wednesday, February 15th
from 6:00-7:15 PM
at the Mansfield Public Library



Families of Kindergarten and 1st Grade students are invited to join School and Public Library staff for a special family literacy event at the Mansfield Public Library! Children will enjoy crafts and activities while parents and caregivers learn about ways to build pre-literacy and early literacy skills with their students. Learn how the public library can help you and your new reader, and pick up some simple, fun tips for growing a reader! We'll end the night with some storytelling. Watch for a flyer with an r.s.v.p. slip coming home soon!

REMINDER: Call the school Attendance Line at 423-2793 by 9:00 am
If your child will be absent or tardy.

If we do not hear from you, we are required to locate you to verify your child's absence. If we cannot reach you, your child's absence will be recorded as unexcused.

School systems are required to monitor attendance and report students who are truant to an appropriate state agency.



**Spring
Plant Sale
to Benefit
Southeast
PTO**

Courtesy of Mr. Hanka and the Southeast Green Thumbs Club. We will be selling mostly vegetables and a few sunflowers.

Sale will be closer to Memorial Day.
Watch for flyers to be sent home in May.